

DNREC's First State Heritage Park Lantern Tours return to light up Fridays this fall

DOVER – DNREC's First State Heritage Park's lantern tours of The Green and three of Dover's historic cemeteries will entertain with stories from Dover's history at 8 p.m. on Friday evenings this fall. Take a walk through Dover's history by the light of a lantern on one of the four of the evening tours offered by the park.

Tours will be held at:

- Old Methodist Cemetery
Fridays, Sept. 7 and Oct. 12
- Christ Episcopal Churchyard
Friday, Sept. 21
- The Green
Friday, Sept. 28
- Presbyterian Churchyard Cemetery
Friday, Oct. 5

Old Methodist Cemetery

Meet at the Johnson Victrola Museum Parking Lot – 375 S. New Street

The stories of those buried in this historic cemetery help reveal the meanings behind the elaborate rituals associated with death and mourning in the 19th-century, as you are guided among the ornately decorated tombstones of the Wesley United Methodist Church's old historic cemetery. Uncover the meanings of the carefully chosen and crafted funeral art that decorates the tombs of the high and lower classes alike, and what those symbols might reveal about the people buried beneath them.

Christ Episcopal Churchyard

Meet at Christ Church – At the corner of South State & Water

Streets

Encounter characters from the past to hear not only tales of the tombstones, but also tales of joy and sorrow from those who are laid to rest within the walls of the churchyard. From Caesar Rodney's unrequited love, to Civil War opponents buried within yards of one another, be prepared for a surprise or two on this unique tour.

Lantern Tour of the Dover Green

Meet at the John Bell House on The Green

Join historical interpreters from the First State Heritage Park dressed in colonial attire as they relate the stories of historic Dover. Dover's public square was the site of markets and fairs, suffragists and abolitionists, soldiers and slaves, lawmakers and law breakers. Hear tales of the most infamous resident of Dover's jail, of devastating fires that threatened the town, of poisonings, and tragic love.

Presbyterian Churchyard Cemetery

Meet at the Johnson Victrola Museum Parking Lot – 375 South New Street

Visit by lantern light the Presbyterian Church of Dover's historic cemetery, where many prominent Delawareans and their families are buried. Among them is Delaware's great statesman John M. Clayton, and Revolutionary War martyr Colonel John Haslet, who died a hero's death at the Battle of Princeton in 1777. Meet these figures from Dover history along with several 18th-century Dover widows with decided opinions about their husbands.

Admission to all lantern tours is \$10. All fall tours begin at 8 p.m. Space is limited; call 302-739-9194 to reserve your lantern. Lantern tours cancelled due to inclement weather will not be rescheduled.

The churchyard tours are made possible with the cooperation of the Presbyterian Church of Dover, Christ Episcopal Church and Wesley United Methodist Church.

The First State Heritage Park is Delaware's first urban "park without boundaries," linking historic and cultural sites in the city that has been the seat of state government since 1777. The park is a partnership of state agencies under the leadership of DNREC's Division of Parks & Recreation, working in collaboration with city and county government, nonprofit organizations and the private sector.

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